

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 L-03 DHA-02 ORM-02 PRS-01

SCA-01 VO-03 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00

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P R 211521Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2679

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0162

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SEF, CVIS, ZA, CG (MOMBAY, LAURENT)

SUBJECT: ASYLUM REQUEST BY ZAIRIAN AIR FORCE OFFICER (MOMBAY,
LAURENT)

1. LAURENT MOMBAY, A LIEUTENANT PILOT IN THE ZAIRE AIR FORCE
(MILITARY SERVICE NUMBER M/F/18157) WALKED INTO EMBASSY
JAN 21, 1976 AND REQUESTED POLITICAL ASYLUM. HE TOLD FOLLOWING
STORY:

2. MOMBAY SAID HE WAS STATIONED AT FAZA NDOLO,
KINSHASA I AS A GMT/K350 FIGHTER PILOT WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED
IN KINSHASA ON JUNE 18 ALONG WITH OTHER JUNIOR OFFICERS BECAUSE
HE COMES FROM KSANGANI, THE SAME AREA AS THE GENERALS ACCUSED
LAST SUMMER OF ATTEMPTING TO OVERTHROW MOBUTU GOVERNMENT.
AFTER THREE WEEKS OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, HE WAS CONVICTED OF
PARTICIPATING IN ALLEGED COUP AND SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IMPRISON-
MENT. HIS ROLE WAS ALLEGEDLY TO ATTACK THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE
BY AIR. HE CLAIMED THAT THE PRISON SENTENCE WAS ONLY FOR PUBLIC
CONSUMPTION AND THAT AS A MILITARY OFFICER HE EXPECTED TO BE
EXECUTED.

3. ON DEC 15, 1975, MOMBAY WAS LOADED ABOARD A HELICOPTER IN
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KINSHASA WITH FIVE OTHER PRISONERS BUT NO GUARD. THEY WERE TO

BE TAKEN TO IREBU WHERE THEY BELIEVED THEY WOULD BE EXECUTED. IN VICINITY OF LUKOLELA, THE PRISONERS OVERPOWERED THE PILOT BY TAKING HIS PISTOL. USING THE PILOT'S PARACHUTE, MOMBAY SUCCESSFULLY JUMPED TO THE GROUND. SUPPOSEDLY, ONE PRISONER FELL OR JUMPED TO HIS DEATH FROM THE HELICOPTER; THE OTHERS STAYED ABOARD AND WERE RECAPTURED.

4. MOMBAY TRAVELED BY FOOT TO MBANDAKA, WHERE HE CHANGED TO FISHERMAN'S CLOTHES AND CAUGHT BOAT TO KISANGANI. POSING AS AN OFFICER IN PLAINCLOTHES, HE THEN COMMANDERED PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO ZAMBIAN BORDER AT SAKANIA. THERE, A RELATIVE, A CUSTOMS OFFICIAL, GAVE HIM MONEY AND A LAISEZ PASSER IN A FALSE NAME.

5. ON JAN 3, 1976, HE ENTERED ZAMBIA WITHOUT IMMIGRATION INSPECTIN BY WALKING THROUGH THE BUSH. IN NDOLA, HE MET A FRIEND AND OBTAINED A ZAIRE PASSPORT FROM THE ZAIRE CONSULTATE GENERAL ON THE BASIS OF HIS FALSE LAISSEZ PASSER.

6. SUBJECT IS AFRAID THAT THE ZAIRE GOVERNMENT CAN REACH HIM IN LUSAKA AND THAT THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT WILL SEND HIM BACK TO ZAIRE SINCE HE IS HERE ILLEGALLY. HE REFUSED TO GIVE EMBOFF FALSE NAME HE IS USING IN ZAMBIA BUT HE AGREED TO BRING ALL HIS TRAVEL/IDENTITY DOCUMENTS WITH HIM WHEN HE RETURNS TO EMBASSY JAN 22. HE FEELS THAT BECAUSE USG WAS ALSO FALSELY ACCUSED OF COMPLICITY IN SAME ALLEGED COUP CONSPIRACY, THE US OWES HIM PROTECTION. HE APPEARS TO HAVE VERY LIMITED FUNDS.

7. MOMBAY HAS WIFE AND THREE CHILDREN IN KINSHASA WHOM HE HAS NOT SEEN SINCE HIS ARREST. HE SPEAKS ALMOST NO ENGLISH.

8. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH HIS ESCAPE STORY SOUNDS FAR-FETCHED, MOMBAY IS COOPERATIVE AND GIVES IMPRESSION OF HAVING BEEN AN EDUCATED MILITARY OFFICER. AUTHENTICITY OF HIS STORY IS DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE FROM THIS DISTANCE. EMBASSY WOULD WELCOME GUIDANCE ON MEANS TO TEST THE STORY AND, IF THE STORY HOLDS, HOW WE SHOULD RESPOND TO REQUEST FOR ASYLUM.

9. REACTION OF ZAMBIAN AUTHORITIES TO A REQUEST BY MOMBAY FOR PROTECTION CANNOT BE PREDICTED BUT THEY WOULD PROBABLY BE INCLINED EXTRADITE HIM TO ZAIRE AFTER CHECKING HIS STORY WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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KINSHASA. AT BEST, THEY LIKELY INSIST HE BE PNG'D AS ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT. WE COULD DISCUSS HIS CASE WITH LOCAL UNHCR REP BUT DISINCLINED DO SO UNTIL HIS BONA FIDES BETTER ESTABLISHED. WILKOWSKI

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